

Catskill Mountain House.
July 17th. 1847.

Dear Fanny & Marian

I must at least begin a letter from this glorious spot, although I have to descend from it in an hour for Albany. After two days of long, perplexing & laborious talk in N. York, (which resulted quite well on the whole), we took the North River boat on Thursday morning, & as if by magic transportation were in an hour minutes floating through the lovely scenery of the Hudson - Charming, & Mr Henry James, a singularly interesting man made high talk for us on the boat. We left them & landed at Catskill village at two o'clock, the four hours' ride took us up to the mountain house which is quite an elegant little palace neat airy, spacious on the very verge of the precipice, 3000 feet above the ocean 12 miles from the river, & overlooking an immense space - It is set quite upon the summit, but almost & backed by mountains peeping above each other's brazen shoulders, & A haze so filled the valley that we could scarcely see beyond the river, yet the prospect was immense, & as the sun went down, the great dark outlines of the mountains stretched away like as if a Michel Angelo had drawn them! We felt ~~the~~ rather than saw their grand presence - And such an atmosphere - so pure, & cool & stimulating, like the prospect of October weather; although all below was summering

& duck'd with the rainy clouds & hid beneath.
It was a sharp sensation to see so much
sprawl out below your feet, hills, valleys,
valleys, houses & yet hear not a sound from
all that life, - the distance was so great. But
why say was? I have it all before me
now. We stopped on fresh red strawberries & other
about the very mountain-top, where they
& other berries grew out at every turn & cranny
of the rocks, with a most friendly welcome.

After a sound sweet sleep, we rose with
the sun & took a three miles ramble through
the wild woods up to, catching majestic views
of the mountain peaks over & across amidst the
leaps & falls until we came to the grand
central sanctuary & altar of the ~~highest~~ of the
whole the Cithole falls!

Monday July 19th. 6. a.m. Lebanon Sprins. Shall go
back & descend to the Cithole falls? I can not do it, but
must wait till I can talk with you about them. You
I have seen nothing so sublime since Niagara. And a
colossal object it must be, & never saw a place
in which & should be like to spend an entire satis-
fied. Or have so cool so nourishing to feel thoughts
& sentiments so plainly. The brain's activity & ac-
tive power of the mind, less & disagreeable. So cool
is it, then one finds such feels like with a brazier
other work there about my house in the hottest day

of prairies. To see a creature & hunt out new
parts amid the trees & rocks is often occa-
sion. For two days I was on my feet trai-
nally & led back labor in the perpendicular way, as always
brought me back to the house with a kick like I
appetite & there was almost luxury to probably it.
The mountains are accord to this seems it. The case
you see in New Haven. Chestnut trees abund & in
the full bloom. The wild flowers, ferns, shrubs &c, hardly
any here now are. The most precious flower at the
time is the wild Raspberry plant. used as a rug inside
oval white place studded with pink & yellow centers
equal to Kewistup's best & literally carpet the room.
I wish I could have sent you an sketch which I saw
of a new species to me while we talk a logistic
with bran of oval Petals & leaves clasped together
the from & And the dear little Rose-bud flower
the prairie before our house rising just over
the edge where any one can walk reach it but
where it is impossible to stand in order to do so.
We came down from the bluffs heights. Sudden
hilly & were back in the prairie plain on the
bottom. Sheep flock & in little hollows - Rose red
make no steps, land took the road at once for
Lebanon. Spring where we have come back to Aug.
This too is a hill a little, retreat, although full of
fascinating - species but the - an old house full of
gravel turns & a hill is surrounded with trees &
edges, with an air of compact & antiquity, without

the fair regularity of new establishment but
looking as if it had gradually moulded itself
to the wants of the human sphere the former
poor summer to summer. It was a dreadfully hot
day, but it did prevent us from walking two
miles & a half to the meeting of the Shakers;
& we made the journey again in the cool of
evening & had some deeply interesting talk
with the elders.

This morning up by ten to enjoy a
plentiful plunge bath, from the spring, &
finish his letter. In an hour we are off
again for the rail-road which will take
us to Springfield, thence to Brattleboro'
Passing through Northampton without stop. We
hope to sleep in Brattleboro' to-night.

Tell the Ardans I will write them an
editorial letter as soon as I come to
another stop. Love to all.

Your affectionate brother,
J. S. D.

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P.S. Should there be occasion to write to me send
to Keene, as that will be the last place. Ex-
pect me home by the end of the week. Tell Fanny Mc-
Daniel I was about to write to her from Catskill, but could not squeeze out
the time.